



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANNUAL QUARANTINE LIFTED FOR SPORT HARVESTED MUSSELS

The statewide annual quarantine on mussels taken by sport harvesters from the ocean waters of California for human consumption will end at midnight on Tuesday, October 31, except in San Luis Obispo County, State Public Health Officer Dr. Mark Horton announced today. Extensive sampling of mussels confirmed that shellfish-borne paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) toxins are at safe or undetectable levels, except in San Luis Obispo County.

The California Department of Health Services (CDHS) has used shellfish quarantines for many years to prevent paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) in consumers of sport-harvested shellfish. The quarantine also helps protect shellfish consumers from domoic acid poisoning.

The annual mussel quarantine is typically issued for the entire California coastline every year from May 1 through October 31. The quarantine only applies to sport-harvested mussels. Commercial shellfish harvesters must be certified by the state and must conduct stringent sampling for toxins. Commercial harvesting is stopped immediately if a potentially dangerous level of toxin is found.

Consumers can receive updated information about PSP and domoic acid by calling the CDHS "Shellfish Information Line" at 1-800-553-4133.

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